

# OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



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*This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide Command Information materiel concerning world events and the U.S. military's role in those events. Ordnance specific events will be covered if appropriate. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email [edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil](mailto:edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil).*

## Sniper kills U.S. soldier in Baghdad

by Chris Tomlinson

(AP) A sniper killed a U.S. soldier on patrol in Baghdad with a single shot, while gunmen targeted Iraqi officials in nearby towns in drive-by shootings likely designed to intimidate them against cooperating with Americans, the military said Tuesday.

The sniper shot the soldier from the 1st Armored Division's 1st Brigade in the back as he rode in a Humvee about 11:30 p.m. Monday, said brigade spokesman Lt. Alex Kasarda. The gunman escaped.

Military officials said it was likely the bullet penetrated the soldier's flak vest, possibly by entering at an angle that missed an armored ceramic plate. The soldier's name was withheld until his family could be notified.

As the soldier was killed, dozens of members of the same brigade raided a cafe and religious school in the same neighborhood, a Sunni Muslim stronghold where resistance fighters have repeatedly ambushed U.S. troops.

During the raid, American troops captured 31 Iraqi men but did not find the resistance ringleaders they sought. The U.S. forces released the Iraqis Tuesday morning.

Kasarda said the two-vehicle convoy wasn't involved in the raid, but was seeking a former Iraqi missile compound when the sniper's bullet punctured the canvas top of the Humvee.

The violence came as U.S. military officials announced that American troops detained more than 400 people in three days of sweeps in Baghdad and northern Iraq to "isolate and defeat remaining pockets of resistance that are seeking to delay the transition to a peaceful and stable Iraq."

On Sunday, insurgents ambushed two U.S. military convoys north of Baghdad, wounding 10 soldiers and an unknown number of Iraqi civilians on a nearby bus.



*A motorist shows his car to U.S. soldiers who are searching for weapons at the checkpoint in Baghdad, Iraq on Monday, June 16, 2003. As the deadline for the weapons amnesty campaign elapsed, U.S. troops stepped up their search for weapons which flooded Baghdad following the fall of Saddam Hussein. (AP Photo/Mikhail Metzel)*

About 50 American soldiers have died from hostile fire or in accidents in Iraq since the United States declared major combat operations over on May 1.

In Fallujah, 35 miles west of Baghdad, suspected anti-American insurgents fired shots into the mayor's office and the courthouse. In the nearby town of Khaldiyyah, gunmen fired into a police station overnight Tuesday. There were no injuries reported.

U.S. forces have restored the authority of local government agencies in the area, working closely with mayors to coordinate aid, paying judges' salaries and rearming local police.

continued on page 2



*U.S. Army military police and infantry make a dawn raid June 16, 2003 in the town of Khaldiya, 50 miles west of Baghdad. About 100 U.S. Army infantry, military police and scouts swooped on six houses in the early hours following a tip-off.*

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### **Sniper kills U.S. soldier in Baghdad continued**

The shootings were the first known attacks directed against Iraqi officials for cooperating with U.S. forces and represented a possible new front for the insurgents, American officials said.

“There is an element of society here that doesn’t want change and they see the coalition forces as bringing change in the form of freedom and democracy,” said Col. David Perkins, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division’s 2nd Brigade. “Anyone they think is helping with that change they are going to try to intimidate and that won’t work.”

The U.S. military entered its third day of a nationwide sweep dubbed Operation Desert Scorpion that aims to arrest anti-American insurgents and find heavy weapons.

In the northern towns of Tikrit and Kirkuk, coalition forces conducted dozens of raids and detained more than 200 people, said a statement from U.S. Central Command.

Troops in the Baghdad area staged 11 raids and detained 156 people, in addition to seizing 121 rifles, two submachine guns, 19 pistols, 18 rocket-propelled grenades, four machine guns, 31 pounds of explosives, and some chemical protective masks, the statement said.

The statement did not say how many people the U.S. forces released, but officers on the ground said many were set free after

brief interrogations.

After barging into a tough Sunni Muslim neighborhood and seizing 44 men for questioning, U.S. soldiers released all but 13 on Tuesday. Truckloads of medical supplies seized in the raids were to be donated to a local hospital.

The Iraqis remaining in custody included three suspected of organizing and helping carrying out a June 1 ambush on U.S. troops in the Azamiyah neighborhood.

Army counterintelligence officers interrogated the captured Iraqis in hopes of gleaning information about the dozen or so Iraqi irregulars who shot and tossed grenades at soldiers from the U.S. Army’s 1st Armored Division. The June 1 ambush at the Abu Hanifa mosque in east Baghdad injured two American soldiers and sparked a firefight that killed two Iraqis.

A pair of raids Monday capped weeks of painstaking intelligence gathering from Iraqi informants who picked out suspects’ houses, as well as surveillance photos from U.S. Special Forces and satellite imagery, said Maj. Scott Bisciotti, an operations officer with 1st Armored.

“We’ve been pursuing every lead, trying to connect all the dots and develop targets,” Bisciotti said.

# President nominates retired general as CSA

by Angela Yeoh

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, June 16, 2003) — President Bush has nominated retired Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker to be the U.S. Army's new chief of staff, following last week's retirement of former Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki.

Schoomaker spent three years as commander-in-chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., before retiring in 2000. He would be the first retired four-star officer ever to be called back to serve as the U.S. Army chief of staff.

In fact, Schoomaker is the first retired general to be called back to active duty with the Joint Chiefs since President John F. Kennedy recalled Gen. Maxwell Taylor in 1962 to serve as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Taylor had served a four-year term as Army chief of staff from 1955-1959, and retired in 1959 before being summoned by the president to return in 1962 as chairman.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced today that the president had nominated Schoomaker as Army chief of staff. Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. John M. Keane has served as acting chief of staff since Shinseki's retirement June 11 and will continue in that position until the Senate confirms Schoomaker.

Schoomaker received a bachelor's degree in Education Administration from the University of Wyoming and an MA in Management from Central Michigan University. He was appointed as a second lieutenant in June 1969 and went to the Armor Officer Basic Course.

He served as a reconnaissance platoon leader from January 1970 through April 1971 at Fort Campbell, Ky. He then served as a rifle company commander in Germany through June 1972, and also commanded a troop of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment from April 1973 through June 1974.

Schoomaker next spent 14 months in Korea, where he served as an assistant inspector general for the 2nd Infantry Division and then as a battalion operations officer.

In February 1978, he assumed command of the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C. Then in August of 1981, he attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

From October 1983 until February 1984, he was in Beirut, Lebanon, as part of the DoD Commission investigating a terrorist incident there after a vehicle loaded with explosives ran a road block, killing U.S. Marines in their barracks.

Schoomaker attended the National War College at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C., from August 1988 to June 1989. Then he commanded the Combat Applications Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg. He next served as the assistant division commander, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, from July 1992 to July 1993.

Schoomaker then served as deputy director of Operations, Readiness

and Mobilization for the Army at the Pentagon through July 1994.

He commanded the Joint Special Operations Command, United States Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, through August of 1996. Then he became commanding general of the United States Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg until October 1997.

In November 1997, he became the commander in chief of the joint United States Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base, where he served until retiring.

## Britain: al-Qaida capable of deadly attack against West

LONDON (AP) - Al-Qaida is still capable of a deadly attack, and it is only a matter of time before terrorists target a Western city with unconventional weapons, the head of Britain's domestic intelligence agency said Tuesday.

"We are faced with the realistic possibility of some form of unconventional attack" that could include chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons, said Eliza Manningham-Buller.

In her first public speech since taking over the MI5 in October, Manningham-Buller said intelligence suggested that "renegade scientists" gave terrorist groups the information they need to create such weapons, which will only become more sophisticated.

But she added that conventional bombs and suicide bomb attacks remained terrorists' preferred weapons.

"They (al-Qaida) still remain an organization capable of deadly terrorist attacks," Manningham-Buller told a conference at the Royal United Services Institute in central London.

"The supply of potential terrorists among extreme elements is unlikely to diminish," she said. "Breaking the link between terrorism and religious ideology is difficult."

Since becoming director-general, Manningham-Buller has been involved in countering a ricin plot in Britain and in reviewing vulnerable targets in London.

Early this year, several men were arrested and accused of plotting to make a chemical weapon after police discovered traces of the deadly poison ricin in a north London apartment.

Manningham-Buller said al-Qaida was "the first truly global threat." Recent suicide terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia and Morocco proved that it and other groups still posed a "potent threat," she added.

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# Just-in-time supplies for Iraq conflict ‘a success’

by Kim Burger, Janes’ Defense Weekly Staff Reporter, Washington, DC

The US-led Operation ‘Iraqi Freedom’ involved a lean, technology-driven logistics system that enabled ground units to fight with just a few days’ worth of water, food and ammunition on hand. This is in stark contrast with the 60 days’ worth of supplies and logistics stockpiled before the 1990-91 US-led campaign against Iraq, defence officials said.

‘Iraqi Freedom’ was also a faster-paced operation that stretched supply lines as coalition ground forces pushed rapidly towards Baghdad. Resupply and sustainment were not perfect in all regards - some units became low on food and water and army officials said the extended line of communication was a challenge.

However, US defence officials and military commanders call the logistics mission for ‘Iraqi Freedom’ a success, tied largely to the investments in information technology, efficient commercial business practices and the new strategic-lift capabilities the US Department of Defense (DoD) has made in recent years. To ensure logistics can match the speed expected in future operations, the DoD is continuing to pursue these types of advancements.

“We didn’t build mountains in this campaign, we moved it and smoothed it out and [provided] just-in-time delivery much like you do in the civilian sector,” said Brig Gen Jack Stoltz, deputy commanding general of the 377th Theater Support Command in Iraq.

US forces operated with just five to seven days of supplies on hand most of the time, he added.

The army applied ‘velocity management’ - calculating the time it takes for supplies to be moved from port to the field - to determine

supply loads. Commanders tracked the shipments to the battlefield on a web-based network. Commercial software applications, like the Joint Flow Analysis System for Transportation, helped automate deployment plans, while video-teleconferences kept top leaders up-to-date on the latest developments.

This was in addition to the medium-speed roll-on/roll-off ships the DoD purchased to expedite the delivery of forces and supplies. US Marine Corps (USMC) and army prepositioned stocks gave the US a boost in bringing equipment into the region.

“You allow the warfighter to track [supplies] in theatre [so] you don’t have these giant bottlenecks that develop through the pipeline,” US Air Force Col Glen Joerger, deputy director of operations for the US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), said. Daily communications with commanders enabled the movement of the right amounts of supplies. “I can’t stress the importance of early collaborative planning, and the use of commercial-off-the-shelf software was key.”

However, these capabilities - designed to generate and exchange information about what is needed on the battlefield and how to get it there - have not solved all the problems of equipping units in the field, particularly when speed is considered key. For example, US Army officials said supply convoys could not always keep up with the next locations of fast-moving combat forces.

“The last 100km is still tough,” said Brig Gen Vincent Boles, deputy commanding general for logistics on the ground in Iraq. Digital communications systems and sealift capabilities eliminated the major

**continued on page 5**

*An Bradley armored personnel carrier passes a flock of sheep near the town of Ramadi on Saturday. AP photo by Victor R. Caivano.*



# Security needed for prosperity to reign, Bush says

by Jim Garamone.American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 16, 2003 – The United States cannot enjoy prosperity without security, President Bush said in a New York City suburb today.

The president visited Orange, N.J., and then spoke to a group in nearby Elizabeth about the connection between security and the ability of corporations and small businesses to “grow” jobs.

“People want to have a secure environment in which to risk capital, and therefore our biggest challenge or one of the biggest challenges is to make sure that we continue to fight and win the war on terror,”

## Just-in-time supplies for Iraq conflict ‘a success’ continued

challenges in transporting supplies to Kuwait. “It’s getting it configured exactly where we need it and when and where the soldier needs it,” Gen Boles said.

Gen Stoltz said the army would like to proceed with fielding a satellite-based communications and situational-awareness system for logistics vehicles called the Movement Tracking System. It provided an “extra advantage” in command and control and tracking forces for the platforms equipped with it in Iraq. Gen Stoltz said he would push for all logistics vehicles to have access to the system.

There is still a level of distrust among troops that existing systems can deliver supplies when needed, leading some commanders to put in multiple orders for items and adding to the demand on the system, officials said. To give commanders access to all DoD supplies and spare parts, the US Joint Forces Command’s (USJFCOM’s) Joint Logistic Transformation Center is developing prototypes of a logistics common operational picture that meshes the information each armed service collects on its stockpiles and requirements, officials said.

The USJFCOM is also looking to encourage better co-ordination among the services and the higher-level joint entities involved in deploying forces. The aim is to “be more collaborative and less reactive”, eliminating inefficiencies in the processes between a deployment order and the arrival of troops in the field, said Col Edward Hatch, who heads the joint deployment process work. Once forces are deployed, some in the DoD believe a single command should oversee the transportation and sustainment activities, with better co-operation and efficiency again the goals.

USTRANSCOM is building a web-based system to integrate information on port availability, lift capacity and other factors, which will enable different components of the process to meet virtually in order to study transportation options, Col Joerger said. Officials would like to bring deployment planning down to hours instead of weeks. The command is also conducting an Agile Transportation for the 21st Century advanced concept technology demonstration to develop an automated system for building transportation alternatives.

the president said.

Bush specifically talked about the need to do everything possible to protect the American homeland. “And that not only means making sure that we cooperate better at the federal, state and local level, and do a better job with our borders and our ports and to communicate better, but it also means that we’ve got to stay on the offensive,” he said.

Bush reiterated U.S. policy toward terrorists and terrorist states. “If you harbor a killer, if you feed a killer, if you hide a killer, you’re just as guilty as the killer,” he said.

“We acted, and the Taliban no longer is in power in Afghanistan, which is not only good for the security of the Free World; it is incredibly good for the people who suffered in Afghanistan under barbaric rule.”

The United States acted to combat the threat of Saddam Hussein. “Now there are some who would like to rewrite history,” he said. “Saddam Hussein was a threat to America and the Free World in ’91, in ’98, in 2003. He continually ignored the demands of the Free World, so the United States and friends and allies acted. ... And this is for certain: Saddam Hussein is no longer a threat to the United States and our friends and allies.

Many local residents perished in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center. Bush said the attacks in New York and Washington shocked Americans with images of the country’s vulnerabilities.

In the aftermath of the attacks, America acted, Bush said. “(The United States) acted because this nation will not be intimidated. This nation will not be blackmailed by terror. This nation will do what it takes to defend something we hold dear to our hearts, and that is our freedom.”

Bush said the best way to defend America is to hunt down terrorists and bring them to justice. “We’ve got a lot of brave troops still on the move, still looking for terrorists,” he said.

“We’re cooperating with our friends and allies. We’re sharing intelligence. We’re running down their money trails. But one thing is certain for the American people to know: that this government will use whatever technologies and skill is necessary to secure America by hunting down those who would harm us, one person at a time. It is a charge we have been given, and it is a charge we will keep.”



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# Printing company takes pride in supporting troops in Iraq

by Zeno Gamble , Special to American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 16, 2003 – Many people are seeking copies of the Defense Department’s “Iraqi Most Wanted Cards.” Unfortunately, many U.S. troops are seeking them as well.

A North Carolina company is working to ensure more troops – 25,000 to be exact – get their own deck.

Defense officials created the cards to help service members identify members of Saddam Hussein’s regime, but they had only a limited number printed. PBM Graphics Inc., a national printing company located near Durham, is printing more cards this week.

Company officials decided to donate the cards after reading an article about the military’s program in USA Today, said Tom Arnold, PBM’s corporate director of marketing. They plan to distribute the new decks through the USO.

“When this came up,” he said, “we thought there’s got to be a lot of soldiers over there. If there were only 1,700 cards sent over originally, then there are a lot of guys that would love to have a deck of cards.”

Community involvement plays an important role in PBM’s mission, Arnold noted. The company supports various organizations and groups that raise money for cancer research and other charities.

“One of the philosophies of our owner from Day 1 has been to give back to the community that has given so much to us,” he said. “We’re also doing some projects for the Special Olympics Team USA that’s going to be competing in the World Games in Ireland at the end of this month.”

PBM’s card division primarily produces game and trading cards such as Pokémon, Harry Potter and Nintendo Game Boy cards. One recent undertaking was the “Heroes” deck of cards they printed for the Air Force, and they are excited about getting these new Iraqi Most Wanted decks to deployed service members.

“It’s the first time that I’ve dealt with the military at the Pentagon,” Arnold said, “and I must say that the enthusiasm and the interest have been incredible.”

Enthusiasm for the project is high among company employees as well. Many have ties to the military. Arnold’s father retired as an Army lieutenant colonel. W.C. Mazingo, PBM’s customer service representative, served as a National Guardsman for six years.

Relatives of the company’s employees “cross the board” from Army to Air Force, Navy to Marines, Arnold said. Their extended family includes a Marine master gunnery sergeant and even a Navy Seal, both serving in Iraq.



*Employees at PBM Graphics Inc. prepare cards for shipment at their bindery facility in Durham, N.C. The company is donating 25,000 decks of “Iraqi Most Wanted Cards” to deployed service members. Photo courtesy of PBM Graphics Inc.*

“You don’t have to walk far down this hall to find somebody with some attachment to the military,” Arnold said. “We’re not far from Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune and many of the other military establishments in this state.”

When the war started in Iraq, company leaders discovered that many employees had sons or daughters serving in the military – some of them in Iraq. The war touched home, Arnold said, when a family member of three PBM employees was killed.

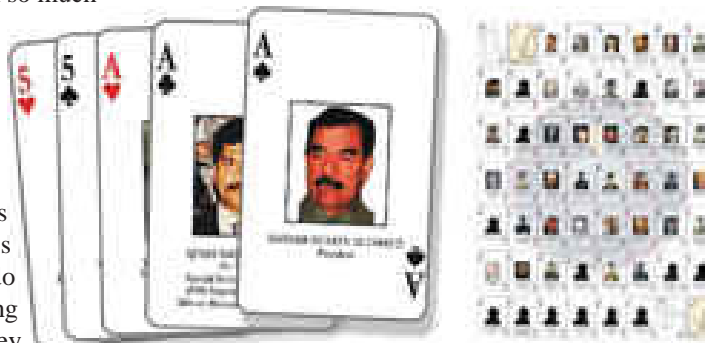
Marine Lance Cpl. Alan Lam lost his life April 22 while serving with the 8th Communication Battalion. He was deployed from the 2nd

Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group at Camp Lejeune. Lam’s mother, sister and brother-in-law all work for PBM. The company held a ceremony in memory of Lam at its Greensboro, N.C., facility.

“Our prayers are with the soldiers over there,” Arnold said. “I wish we could do more than we did. You see all this going on, and you wonder how you can be a part of it and what you can do.”

The PBM folks appreciate the opportunity to support the nation’s service members in Iraq, he concluded. “It’s a labor of love for our employees, I can tell you that.”

*(Zeno Gamble is a writer in the Executive Secretariat at the Pentagon.)*





# A broken body, a broken story, pieced together

*Investigation reveals Lynch — still in hospital after 67 days — suffered bone-crushing injuries in crash during ambush*

by Dana Priest, William Booth and Susan Schmidt, Washington Post Staff Writers

Jessica Lynch, the most famous soldier of the Iraq war, remains in a private room at the end of a hall on an upper floor of Walter Reed Army Medical Center, her door guarded by a military police officer.

To repair the fractures, a spinal injury and other injuries suffered during her ordeal, the 20-year-old private first class undergoes a daily round of physical therapy. But she does so alone, during the lunch hours, when other patients are not admitted.

Her father, Greg Lynch Sr., wearing a fresh T-shirt each day with a yellow ribbon pinned to his chest, rarely leaves her side, except to sleep at night. Lynch has been in the hospital now for 67 days. Her physical condition remains severe. But she also appears to suffer from wounds that cannot be seen — and the story of her capture and rescue remains only partly told.

Her family says she doesn't remember anything about her capture. U.S. military sources say she is unable — or unwilling — to say much about anything that happened to her between the morning her Army unit was ambushed and when she became fully conscious sometime later at Saddam Hussein General Hospital in Nasiriyah, Iraq.

As the world would remember, Lynch and her Army maintenance unit were ambushed in southern Iraq on the morning of March 23. Eleven of her fellow soldiers were killed; five others were taken captive and later freed. Blond and waiflike, Lynch was taken prisoner and held separately for nine days before a dramatic nighttime rescue from her hospital bed by a covert U.S. Special Operations unit, Task Force 20.

Initial news reports, including those in The Washington Post, which cited unnamed U.S. officials with access to intelligence reports, described Lynch emptying her M-16 into Iraqi soldiers. The intelligence reports from intercepts and Iraqi informants said that Lynch fought fiercely, was stabbed and shot multiple times, and that she killed several of her assailants.

"She was fighting to the death," one of the officials was quoted as saying. "She did not want to be taken alive."

It became the story of the war, boosting morale at home and among the troops. It was irresistible and cinematic, the maintenance clerk turned woman-warrior from the hollows of West Virginia who just



*Details reveal Pfc. Jessica Lynch - still in the hospital 67 days after being rescued from an Iraqi hospital - suffered her injuries in a vehicle crash when she and her Army maintenance unit were ambushed in March.*

wouldn't quit. Hollywood promised to make a movie and the media, too, were hungry for heroes.

Lynch's story is far more complex and different than those initial reports. Much of the story remains shrouded in mystery, in large part because of official Army secrecy, concerns for Lynch's privacy and her limited memory.

The Post's initial coverage attracted widespread criticism because many of the sources were unnamed and because the accounts were soon contradicted by other military officials. In an effort to document more fully what had actually happened to Lynch, The Post interviewed dozens of people, including associates of Lynch's family in West Virginia; Iraqi doctors, nurses and civilian witnesses in Nasiriyah; and U.S. intelligence and military officials in Washington, three of whom have knowledge of a weeks-long Army investigation into the matter.

The result is a second, more thorough but inconclusive cut at history. While much more is revealed about her ordeal, most U.S. officials still insisted that their names be withheld from this account.

Lynch tried to fire her weapon, but it jammed, according to military officials familiar with the Army investigation. She did not kill any Iraqis. She was neither shot nor stabbed, they said.

Lynch's unit, the 507th Maintenance Company, was ambushed outside Nasiriyah after taking several wrong turns. Army investigators believe this happened in part because superiors never passed on word that the long 3rd Infantry Division column that the convoy was following had been rerouted. At times, the 507th was 12 hours behind the main column and frequently out of radio contact.

**continued on page 7**

## A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued

Lynch was riding in a Humvee when it plowed into a jackknifed U.S. truck. She suffered major injuries, including multiple fractures and compression to her spine, that knocked her unconscious, military sources said. The collision killed or gravely injured the Humvee's four other passengers.

Two U.S. officials with knowledge of the Army investigation said Lynch was mistreated by her captors. They would not elaborate.

Tipped that Lynch was inside Saddam Hussein General Hospital in Nasiriyah, the CIA, fearing a trap, sent an agent into the facility with a hidden camera to confirm she was there, intelligence sources said.

The Special Operations unit's full-scale rescue of the private, while justified given the uncertainty confronting U.S. forces as they entered the compound, ultimately was proven unnecessary. Iraqi combatants had left the hospital almost a day earlier, leaving Lynch in the hands of doctors and nurses who said they were eager to turn her over to Americans.

Neither the Pentagon nor the White House publicly dispelled the more romanticized initial version of her capture, helping to foster the myth surrounding Lynch and fuel accusations that the Bush administration stage-managed parts of Lynch's story.

Only Lynch is in position to know everything that happened to her — and she may not ever be able to tell the story.

"The doctors are reasonably sure," said Army spokesman Kiki Bryant, "that she does not know what happened to her."

### Falling Behind

On the western outskirts of Nasiriyah, just a few miles from the city's downtown, a middle-aged farmer named Sahib Khudher was worried and outside of his house when a large U.S. convoy — a dozen or more trucks, trailers, wreckers and Humvees — passed by on the road heading north a few hours before dawn, he said. It was March 23, the fourth day of the war, as U.S. troops poured into Iraq in a modern-day blitz.

The farmer waved at the Americans. "But they did not see me," he said.

A few hours later, trucks mysteriously returned. At first, Khudher thought they might be Iraqi army members or Republican Guards coming to fight. But he saw that the vehicles were American, and that they were being pursued in a wild, running gun battle with pickup trucks filled with what Khudher assumed were militia from Saddam's Fedayeen and Iraqi irregulars in civilian clothing. They were firing into the U.S. vehicles and at their tires.

"There was shooting, shooting everywhere," Khudher said. "There were accidents, too. Crash sounds. You could see and hear the vehicles hitting each other. And yelling. Screaming. I could hear English."

### Off the Path

Jessica Lynch's maintenance company was ambushed on the outskirts of Nasiriyah, Iraq, after making several wrong turns.



SOURCE: Defense officials

THE WASHINGTON POST

continued on page 9



## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

The 18 Humvees, trailers and tow trucks of Lynch's 507th Maintenance Company were the tail end of the 3rd Infantry Division's 8,000-vehicle convoy snaking its way from Kuwait to Baghdad. A Patriot missile maintenance crew by training, the members of the 507th based at Fort Bliss, Tex., were assigned to keep the Army's war machine moving.

The initial plan called for moving north on "Route Blue," Highway 8, until the southern outskirts of Nasiriyah, according to military officials. Because the city was still teeming with enemy fighters, commanders decided to reroute the column to "Route Jackson," Highway 1, which skirted around the town to the south and west.

### **But the 507th never got word of the change.**

The miscommunication happened, in part, Army investigators believe, because a battalion commander in the 3rd Forward Support Battalion to which it was attached never made sure the 507th had received word of the route change.

"They didn't know about Route Jackson," said one senior military officer briefed on the investigators' findings. "We believe it would have never happened if the proper procedure had been followed." No disciplinary action is expected, said the official, who attributed the tragedy to the fog of war.

The unit fell behind as the enormous wrecking tractors and cargo trailers — equipment to haul other giant Army vehicles and supplies — tried to adjust to the division's changing pace.

But other mishaps contributed. Long before they reached Nasiriyah, two of the 507th's 5-ton trailers had broken down, forcing the back half of the unit — 18 vehicles in all — to fall farther behind the lead elements, where the company commander was riding.

Lynch was among the soldiers in that trailing half.

By the time the 507th reached Nasiriyah, some of the unit's soldiers and officers had gone without sleep for 60 hours. As one officer put it, they suffered "a fatigue that adversely affected their decision-making."

### **A 'Catastrophic' Crash**

The commander of Lynch's company — a captain whose identity could not be learned — informed superiors up ahead that they had fallen as many as 12 hours behind. "He was advised the rest of the column has to move on time whether the rest of them get there or not," a defense official familiar with the Army's investigation said.

Navigating through unfamiliar streets, troops jury-rigged antennas to stay in touch with the lead elements of the battalion, since their radios had a range of only 10 miles. But the radios didn't always work.

It was about 6:30 a.m. when they entered the city, and few Iraqis were about. Those who were, including soldiers at checkpoints and armed men in SUVs, just waved at the Americans as they drove by,

military officials said.

Using a navigational device, the company commander turned the convoy left and, minutes later, came to a T-intersection, where he ordered the vehicles to turn right again. Then the commander decided to turn around the column of huge, lumbering trailers and tractors.

They attempted to retrace their route, but missed a turn. Then one of the U.S. vehicles ran out of fuel.

Lynch at this point was riding on a 5-ton truck, officials believe, although they are still uncertain.

It was 7 a.m., and more Iraqis were appearing on the streets, military officials with knowledge of the Army investigation said. The company commander instructed his troops to lock and load their weapons. Each soldier had 210 rounds of ammunition. The senior noncommissioned officer, Master Sgt. Robert J. Dowdy, 38, took the rear position in the column, while the company commander went up front.

"We have to pick up speed, move faster!" Dowdy began yelling over the radio, according to the defense official, who has read the surviving soldiers' accounts.

As the convoy drove back into central Nasiriyah, it was met by Iraqi forces, some in civilian clothing, who fired at it from on foot, from vehicles and from stationary mortar positions. Soldiers interviewed by investigators said the Iraqis fired AK-47s, machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, hand grenades and mortar shells. The Iraqis fired from both sides of the road.

At least one Iraqi T-55 tank appeared, and the Iraqis positioned sandbags, debris and cars to block the convoy's path.

"A very harrowing, very intense" gun battle was how the senior military officer described it. The U.S. troops fired back.

"We don't know how many rounds she got off," the official said of Lynch, or whether she got off any shots at all. "Her weapon jammed severely."

At some point, Lynch's vehicle is believed to have broken down and she got into Dowdy's soft-top Humvee, which was driven by Pfc. Lori Piestewa, one of Lynch's close friends. They were joined by two other soldiers whose wrecker became disabled. Dowdy pulled them to safety at great risk to himself, the defense official said. They took the seats on either side of Lynch, who sat atop the transmission hump in the middle.

As his soldiers came under fire, Dowdy, now with four soldiers in his Humvee, sped along the road at speeds of 50 mph, encouraging his soldiers "to get into the fight, trying to get vehicles to move and getting soldiers out of one broken-down vehicle and into another," the senior military officer said.

**continued on page 11**

## Special Forces soldier awarded Silver Star for heroism in Afghanistan

Story and photo by Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (Army News Service, June 16, 2003) —A 5th Special Forces Group soldier received the Army's third-highest valor award during a ceremony June 12 for his actions in a January 2002 raid on a suspected al Qaeda stronghold in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Master Sgt. Anthony S. Pryor, a team sergeant with Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th SFG, received the Silver Star Medal for his gallantry in combat during the raid when he single-handedly eliminated four enemy soldiers, including one in unarmed combat, all while under intense automatic weapons fire and with a crippling injury.

"Receiving this award is overwhelming, but... this isn't a story about one guy," Pryor said of the events that led to his Silver Star. "It's a story about the whole company instead of an award on the chest. If the guys hadn't done what they were supposed to do, (the mission) would've been a huge failure."

"I just did what I had to do," he continued, recalling his hand-to-hand struggle against the suspected terrorists. "It wasn't a heroic act - it was second-nature. I won, and I moved forward."

During the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Geoffrey C. Lambert, commanding general of the U.S. Army Special Forces Command, said that Pryor was a perfect example of the Special Forces mentality.

"About a year ago ... I said to Tony, 'what did you think when that fellow knocked your night-vision goggles off, pulled your arm out of its socket and was twisting it, all while you were fighting with your other hand?'" Lambert said. "And (Pryor) said, 'it's show time.' He must have meant what he said, because he earned that Silver Star. Think about a cold, black night; think about fighting four guys at the same time, and somebody jumps on your back and starts beating you with a board. Think about the problems you'd have to solve - and he did."

"This is the singular hand-to-hand combat story that I have heard from this war," Lambert added. "When it came time to play, he played, and he did it right."

On Jan. 23, 2002, Pryor's company received an order from the U.S. Central Command to conduct their fourth combat mission of the war - a sensitive site exploitation of two compounds suspected of harboring Taliban and al Qaeda terrorists in the mountains of Afghanistan.

Because of the presence of women and children within the compounds, Pryor said aerial bombardment was not considered an option. Once on the ground, the company was to search for key leadership, communications equipment, maps and other intelligence.

Sgt. 1st Class Scott Neil was one of the team members there with Pryor that night at the second compound. A Special Forces weapons sergeant, he fought on Pryor's team as a cell leader and found himself



*Master Sgt. Anthony S. Pryor (right) of the 5th Special Forces Group looks on as he is applauded by 5th SFG commander Col. John Mulholland after receiving the Silver Star Medal during a June 12 ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky. Pryor was awarded the Silver Star for his gallantry in combat during a January 2002 raid on a suspected al Qaeda stronghold in Afghanistan, when he single-handedly eliminated four enemy soldiers, including one in unarmed combat, all while under intense automatic weapons fire and with a crippling injury.*

momentarily pinned down by the sudden hail of bullets after the team's position was compromised.

"After the initial burst of automatic weapons fire, we returned fire in the breezeway," Neil said. "It was a mental spur - after we heard the words 'let's go,' everything just kind of kicked in."

Moments later, though, the team became separated in the confusion, but with the situation desperate for the Special Forces soldiers against a determined and larger-than-expected enemy, Pryor and one of his teammates kept moving forward, room to room. They began to enter a room together, but another enemy soldier outside the room distracted the team member, so he stayed outside to return fire.

Pryor first encountered an enemy that was charging out of the room and assisted in eliminating him. Then, without hesitation, Pryor moved ahead into the room and found himself alone with three more enemy soldiers.

According to Pryor, the next two enemies he saw were firing their weapons out of the back of the room at his men that were still outside the compound.

"I went in, and there were some windows that they were trying to get their guns out of to shoot at our guys that hadn't caught up

**continued on page 11**

## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

The soldiers in Dowdy's Humvee "had their weapons at the ready and their seat belts off," said the senior officer, who was also briefed on the investigation. "We assume they were firing back."

There were other acts of bravery. One soldier, whose name could not be learned, bolted from his vehicle to try to rescue other soldiers from a disabled vehicle. He took cover behind a berm, not realizing at first that Iraqi soldiers were on the other side in a mortar pit. When he did, he killed a half-dozen of them with his weapons, the defense official said. Soon, though, he was surrounded by a couple of dozen armed Iraqis and is believed to have been killed on the spot.

"He didn't have a chance," said the official.

A U.S. tractor-trailer with a flatbed swerved around an Iraqi dump truck and jackknifed. As Dowdy's speeding Humvee approached the overturned tractor-trailer, it was hit on the driver's side by a rocket-propelled grenade. The driver, Piestewa, lost control of the Humvee, swerved right and struck the trailer.

The senior defense official described the collision as "catastrophic."

Dowdy, sitting in the passenger seat, was killed instantly. So, probably, were the two soldiers on either side of Lynch. Piestewa and Lynch were seriously injured, according to the senior officer's account.

Lynch's arm and legs were crushed by the compression, U.S. military doctors later concluded. Tiny bone fragments protruded through her skin.

Khudher, the Iraqi farmer, remembered seeing a Humvee crash into a truck. Later, when it was safe to approach the road, he saw "two American women, one dark-skinned, one light-skinned, pulled from the Humvee. I think the light one was dead. The dark-skinned one was hurt."

Khudher appears to have seen Lynch, who is white, unconscious, taken prisoner, as well as Piestewa, who was Native American, still alive.

In the hours after the ambush, Arabic-speaking interpreters at the National Security Agency, reviewing intercepted Iraqi communications from either hand-held radios or cellular phones, heard references to "an American female soldier with blond hair who was very brave and fought against them," according to a senior military officer who read the top-secret intelligence report when it came in. An intelligence source cited reports from Iraqis at the scene, saying she had fired all her ammunition.

**continued on page 12**

## **Special Forces soldier awarded Silver Star for heroism in Afghanistan continued**

yet," he said. "So I went from left to right, indexed down and shot those guys up. I realized that I was well into halfway through my magazine, so I started to change magazines. Then I felt something behind me, and thought it was (one of my teammates) - that's when things started going downhill."

Pryor said it was an enemy soldier, a larger-than-normal Afghan, who had snuck up on him.

"There was a guy back behind me, and he whopped me on the shoulder with something, and crumpled me down."

Pryor would later learn that he had sustained a broken clavicle and a dislocated shoulder during the attack.

"Then he jumped up on my back, broke my night-vision goggles off and starting getting his fingers in my eyeballs. I pulled him over, and when I hit down on the ground, it popped my shoulder back in."

Pryor said that after he stood up, he was face to face with his attacker. Pryor eliminated the man during their hand-to-hand struggle.

Pryor had now put down all four enemies, but the fight wasn't over yet.

"I was trying to feel around in the dark for my night-vision goggles, and that's when the guys I'd already killed decided that they weren't dead yet."

Pryor said that it was then a race to see who could get their weapons

up first, and the enemy soldiers lost. He then left the room and rejoined the firefight outside. When the battle ended, 21 enemy soldiers had been killed. There were no American casualties, and Pryor had been the only soldier injured.

"Tony is getting a Silver Star because he entered a room by himself, and he engaged the enemy by himself," said Sgt. 1st Class James Hogg, a Special Forces medical sergeant on Pryor's team. "He elevated his pure soldier instinct and went to the next level, and that's what this award is recognizing. He didn't stop after his initial battle, and continued to lead."

Leading his soldiers, despite his injuries, is something Neil said that Pryor couldn't seem to stop doing.

"As soon as he left that room, he came running up to me and wanted to know if everybody was okay," Neil said, describing Pryor after he had emerged from his four-on-one fight. "He never mentioned anything about what went on ... and during the whole objective and as the firefight continued, he never stopped. He was always mission-first, and that's what his Silver Star is all about."

Pryor is the third Special Forces soldier to receive the Silver Star Medal for actions during Operation Enduring Freedom. The other two, Master Sgt. Jefferson Davis and Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Petithory, also of the 5th SFG (Abn.), received theirs posthumously.

*(Editor's note: Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner is assigned to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command public affairs office at Fort Bragg, N.C.)*



## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

Over the next hours and days, commanders at Central Command, which was running the war from Doha, Qatar, and CIA officers with them at headquarters were bombarded with military “sit reps” and agency Field Information Reports about the ambush, according to intelligence and military sources. The Iraqi reports included information about a female soldier. One said she died in battle. Some said she was wounded by shrapnel. Some said she had been shot in the arm and leg, and stabbed.

These reports were distributed only to generals, intelligence officers and policymakers in Washington who are cleared to read the most sensitive information the U.S. government possesses.

These intelligence reports, and the one bit of eavesdropping, created the story of the war.

### **‘She Would Have Died’**

Down a two-lane blacktop rolling through dry farmlands, just a mile or two from the ambush site, lies the Iraqi military hospital of Nasiriyah. It was where Lynch was first treated after her capture.

Today, the three-story structure is a gutted ruin, charred from fires. Mangled brown Iraqi military vehicles fill the parking lot.

On the morning of Lynch’s capture, the military hospital was a beehive, with fleeing, fighting and wounded Iraqi troops coming and going as U.S. troops swept into Iraq from Kuwait.

Adnan Mushafafawi, a brigadier in the Iraqi army medical corps, a member of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein’s Baath Party and the director of the hospital, said a policeman brought in two female U.S. soldiers about 10 a.m.

“They were both unconscious,” he said. They were severely wounded, he recalled, exhibiting symptoms of shock and trauma. He read their dog tags: They were Lynch and her friend Piestewa.

“Miss Lori,” Mushafafawi said, “had bruises all over her face. She was bleeding from the eyes. A severe head wound.” He said Piestewa died soon after arriving at the hospital.

Did either soldier display evidence she had been stabbed or shot? “No, no,” he said. Pressed, he later answered, “Maybe Miss Lori, maybe shot.”

Mushafafawi said he and his medical staff cut away Lynch’s uniform and threw her clothes on the floor. She lay on a gurney, almost naked, as Iraqi military doctors and nurses worked on her, he said.

Lynch had multiple fractures, Mushafafawi said, a head injury that he described as minor. He said the staff sutured the wound. She was given blood and intravenous fluids, he said. The staff took X-rays, partly set her fractures and applied splints and plaster casts to them.

“If we had left her without treatment, she would have died,” Mushafafawi said.

The military doctor said Lynch briefly regained consciousness at

his hospital, but appeared disoriented. “She was very scared,” he said. “We reassured her that she would be safe now.”

But when Mushafafawi suggested to Lynch that he might attempt to better set her leg fracture, Lynch said “she didn’t want us to do anything more,” he recalled.

“She was here two, three hours,” the doctor said, and then transferred by military ambulance to Nasiriyah’s main civilian facility, Saddam Hussein General Hospital across town.

Mushafafawi said he assumed his military hospital probably would be attacked by U.S. forces, which two days later overran the compound. He said that it was his decision to transfer Lynch, and that no military or intelligence officers accompanied her. Piestewa’s body also was transported to Saddam Hussein hospital.

Mushafafawi said he did not know what happened to Piestewa or Lynch between their capture shortly after 7 a.m. and their appearance at his hospital about three hours later.

Later that day, the Arab news network al-Jazeera broadcast graphic close-up film of bodies, believed to be from Lynch’s unit, sprawled on a concrete floor at an undisclosed location. Two of the soldiers appeared to have been shot in the forehead, one between the eyes. A smiling Iraqi moved among the bodies, displaying them for the camera.

Four exhausted and shaken POWs from the 507th were shown in the same newscast, giving minimal answers to questions posed by their Iraqi captors who had transported them to Baghdad.

### **‘Crying All the Time’**

When Lynch arrived at Saddam Hussein hospital in a military ambulance that afternoon, the nurses and doctors who admitted her said they were surprised to find an American woman, almost naked, her limbs in plaster casts, beneath a sheet.

Interviewed recently about Lynch’s stay at the hospital, staff members insisted that they gave her the best care they could, and that they did not believe it was possible for Iraqi agents to have abused her while she was there. Though Iraqi military, intelligence and Baath Party officials began using the hospital as a base of operations, they said they saw no one mistreat Lynch — though a member of Iraq’s intelligence service was posted outside her door.

As the doctors and nurses recalled, Lynch’s condition was grave as they brought her into the emergency room. In addition to her multiple fractures, her extremities were cold, her blood pressure down, her heart rate accelerated. She was unconscious and in shock.

The hospital was operating, but stressed to its limits. Only a dozen doctors from a staff of 60 came to work; the nursing staff was skeletal as the roads were too dangerous to travel; the electricity was

## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

sporadic; the generators were failing; medical supplies spotty; and all the while, during Lynch's stay at the hospital, the hospital was receiving more than 200 casualties a day. One young intern said he was reduced to mopping up bloody floors himself.

"It was substandard care, by American standards, we know this, okay? But Jessica got the best we could offer," said Harith Hassona, one of two young resident physicians who assisted in her care.

After several days of treatment, Lynch's condition improved. She was moved from the emergency room to an empty cardiac care unit, where she had her own room, and was tended to by two female nurses.

But she was in pain, and given powerful drugs. She ate, sporadically, asking for juice and crackers. The staff said she was offered Iraqi hospital food, but refused. "She wanted to see things opened in front of her — then she would eat," said Furat Hussein, one of her nurses.

Her mental state varied from hour to hour, according to the Iraqi nurses and doctors. "She would joke with us sometimes, and sometimes she would weep," Hussein said.

"She didn't want to be left alone and she didn't want strangers to care for her," said Anmar Uday, one of the two primary care physicians. "One time, she asked me, 'Why are you standing in front of me? Are you going to hurt me?' We said no, we're here to help you."

"Crying all the time," recalled Khalida Shnan, a nurse who wept herself when describing how she tried to comfort Lynch by singing to her night and rubbing talc on her shoulders. Mahdi Khafaji, an orthopedic surgeon, said he knew that sooner or later U.S. troops would come for Lynch, and "we wanted to show the Americans that we are human beings."

Khafaji said treating Lynch well was in their self-interest: "She was more important at that moment than Saddam Hussein." He added, "You could not help but feeling sorry for her. A young girl. An American. A prisoner. We did our best. Believe me, she was the only orthopedic surgery I performed." Khafaji suggested that as he worked on Lynch, ordinary Iraqis went without treatment, and some may have died.

But Khafaji said that, without a doubt, the Iraqi leadership was also employing Lynch as a human shield.

If the hospital was chaotic and understaffed, it was also overrun with senior Iraqi officials, who were living and working out of the basement, clinics, and the doctors' residence halls and offices.

The staff said there were 50 to 100 Iraqi combatants in or around the hospital at any one time — though the number shrank day by day as deserters fled at night and the Americans closed in.

The head of the municipal government, Younis Mohammad Thareb, was there, as was senior Baath Party officer Adel Abdallah Doori.

There were military and special security officers also, as well as Iraqi militia and members of Saddam's Fedayeen.

"They were all here," Hassona said.

Someone in civilian clothing, whom Hassona said was a low-ranking employee of one of the Iraqi intelligence services, stood guard outside Lynch's door. Hassona and other hospital staff members said they kept a close eye on Lynch; they feared that Iraqi officials might try to move or harass or interrogate her. "But you have to understand that these guys knew the Americans were coming, and toward the end, they were most worried about saving themselves," Hassona said.

But there was still an atmosphere of fear.

"When she woke up once, she was saying she was scared and wanted someone to stay with her," Hassona recalled. "She said, 'I'm afraid of Saddam Hussein,' and I said, 'Shhhh. Don't say that name. You must keep quiet.'"

Soon after Lynch's arrival, Hassona and Khafaji said they were approached by an intelligence officer and asked how soon Lynch could be moved.

"I told him 72 hours, at least," Khafaji said.

Khafaji said that Lynch's wounds made him suspicious. The fractures were on both sides of her body, for example, and "if they all came from a car accident, there was no glass in her wounds, no lacerations or deep bruises."

U.S. military sources believe most if not all the fractures could have been caused by extreme compression during her vehicle accident. Khafaji said "maybe a car accident, or maybe they broke her bones with rifle butts or by stomping on her legs. I don't know. They know and Jessica knows. I can only guess."

## **A Lawyer's Story**

Within a few days of her capture, U.S. military and intelligence agencies would learn from several Iraqis in Nasiriyah that one of the 507th soldiers was being held captive at Saddam Hussein hospital.

One of those Iraqis was Mohammed Odeh Rehaief, a 32-year-old lawyer who told U.S. authorities he learned about Lynch on March 27, when he went there to see his wife, Iman, a nurse in the kidney unit.

"In the hospital corridors, I observed a large number of Fedayeen Saddam," Rehaief recounted in a statement. "I knew they were Fedayeen because they were wearing their traditional black ninja-style uniforms that covered everything but their eyes. I also saw high army officials there."

**continued on page 14**

## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

Rehaief said a doctor friend told him about Lynch. He peered through a glass panel into her room, he said, and “saw a large man in black looming over a bed that contained a small bandaged woman with blond hair.”

There were epaulets on the man’s shirt, indicating he was a Fedayeen officer, Rahaief said. “He appeared to be questioning the woman through a translator. Then I saw him slap her — first with the palm of his hand, then with the back of his hand.”

When the Fedayeen officer left, Rehaief said, he crept into Lynch’s room and told her he would help her. “Don’t worry,” he said. He then walked east across Nasiriyah, where he encountered a group of Marines and told them about Lynch.

The Marines — who corroborated Rehaief’s story that he assisted them — sent him back to the hospital several times to map out access to the site and the route getting there, and to count the number of Iraqi troops inside.

The staff of the civilian hospital believes Rehaief did tell the Marines about Lynch, but some nurses and doctors disputed other parts of his story.

The head nurse of the hospital said there is no nurse named Iman employed by the facility, or any nurse married to a lawyer. “This is something we would know,” she said.

“Never happened,” Hassona said. Men in black slapping Lynch? “That’s some Hollywood crap you’d tell the Americans.” Hassona said he suspected the lawyer embellished his story.

After the rescue, Rehaief and his wife were transported by U.S. forces to a military camp in Kuwait. Rahaief, along with his wife and daughter, was granted political asylum in the United States. He is living in Northern Virginia, working on a book for HarperCollins and with NBC for a television movie on the rescue.

Rahaief and members of Lynch’s family have not sought each other out.

### **Rescue**

Task Force 20, a covert U.S. Special Operations unit, worked on only the highest U.S. priorities in Iraq: hunting for weapons of mass destruction, weapons scientists and Baath Party leaders — and rescuing Jessica Lynch.

Among the pre-mission briefings the group received before its move on the hospital was the fact that the hospital had been reportedly visited by Ali Hassan Majeed, otherwise known as “Chemical Ali,” one of the most sought-after targets in the Iraqi leadership. Sources on the ground and imagery from Predator unmanned vehicles, which had been flying over the hospital for days, indicated it might serve as some kind of military command-and-control facility.

Militarily, “they knew they were going into an unknown situation,” said one Special Operations officer. “They came armed for bear.” Central Command was worried enough about the Iraqi military’s response that it ordered a force of Marines, with tanks and armored personnel carriers, into Nasiriyah in a feint to draw attention away from the hospital.



About 1 a.m. on April 1, commandos in blacked-out Blackhawk helicopters and protected by low, slow-flying AC-130 gunships, swooped toward the hospital grounds. Marines fanned out as an exterior perimeter, while Army Rangers made a second protective shield just outside the hospital walls. These forces took light fire from adjacent buildings, according to military sources.

Commandos burst into the hospital, fired explosive charges meant to disorient anyone inside and headed for Lynch’s room, according to U.S. accounts.

“We heard the helicopters and we decided we would go to the radiology unit,” said Anmar Uday, a doctor, because the X-ray room was lined with lead.

The Iraqis heard shouts of “Go! Go! Go!” and soon the commandos were upon them. They said no shots were fired in the hospital and no one resisted, that there were only doctors and staff and a few hundred patients left. “It was like a ‘Rambo’ movie,” Uday said. “But we were not Rambo. We just waited to be told what to do.”

“There was not a firefight inside of the building, I will tell you, but there were firefights outside of the building, getting in and out,” Brig. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks told reporters at Central Command in Qatar.

The commandos found Lynch in a private room, atop the hospital’s

**continued on page 15**



## **A broken body, a broken story, pieced together continued**

only bed used to ease the pain of bedsores, a special sand-filled tub. She was accompanied by a male nurse in a white jacket.

“Jessica Lynch, we’re the United States soldiers and we’re here to protect you and take you home,” a Special Forces soldier called out, according to Air Force Maj. Gen. Victor E. Renuart Jr., who briefed reporters three days later.

“I’m an American soldier, too,” she answered from her hospital bed.

Troops found “ammunition, mortars, maps, a terrain model and other things that make it very clear that it was being used as a military command post,” Brooks said.

Saad Abdul Razaq, the hospital’s assistant administrator, said he was corralled with others in a corner. “They were pointing a gun at me and I thought, it’s all over, I’m going to die,” he said.

Razaq and the hospital staff said the last Iraqi military and civilian leaders had fled the morning of the raid; they stripped off their green uniforms, abandoned their vehicles in the parking lot and disappeared. None of the hospital staff was injured during the rescue.

The U.S. troops recovered two American bodies from the morgue. Staff members escorted the Americans to a grave site outside the building, by a soccer field, where the bodies of seven U.S. soldiers were buried. The hospital staff said the bodies — all members of Lynch’s convoy — were put under the earth because the morgue’s faltering refrigerators could not slow decomposition. Navy SEALs dug the bodies up with their hands, according to military officials.

A few hours after the last members of Task Force 20 flew away in helicopters, a contingent of U.S. tanks and trucks rolled up to the hospital’s front door without firing a shot.

Central Command’s public affairs office in Qatar geared up to make the most of the rescue.

“We wanted to make sure we got whatever visuals were available,” said one public affairs officer involved. The task force had photographed the rescue. Special Forces had already provided exclusive, opening-day video to the news media of Iraqi border posts being destroyed by nighttime raids. That had been a hit, public affairs officers believed.

“We let them know, if possible we wanted to get it, we’d like to have” the video, said Lt. Col. John Robinson, a Central Command public affairs officer. “We were hoping we would have good visuals. We knew it would be the hottest thing of the day. There was not an intent to talk it down or embellish it because we didn’t need to. It was an awesome story.”

For the U.S. military and the American public, Lynch’s rescue came as a joyous moment in one of the darkest hours of the war, when U.S. troops looked like they were going to be bogged down on their way to Baghdad. But the rescue had gone off without a hitch.

“It took on a life of its own,” said one colonel who tried to answer

the barrage of media queries. “Reporters seem to be reporting on each other’s information. The rescue turned into a Hollywood concept.”

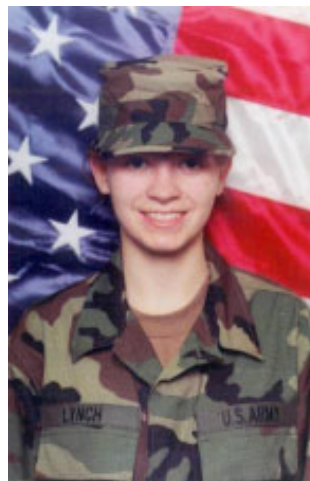
### **Making Progress**

After her rescue, nowhere was the joy greater than in Lynch’s home town of tiny Palestine, W.Va., where Greg and Deadra Lynch had struggled to stay hopeful as days slipped by without news of their missing daughter.

The family’s elation was tempered when it discovered the true extent of Lynch’s injuries upon reaching her bedside at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

At Walter Reed, Lynch’s bones have been put back together with such a delicate and extensive network of rods and pins that it can take an hour for her to move from bed to wheelchair.

“She is still struggling with pain and her recovery will be slow,” said family spokesman Randy Coleman. Her mother said, “It’s amazing she can walk at all — she is a body full of pins and screws,” Coleman recounted.



Still, Lynch is making progress. She recently walked more than 100 steps using a walker. “She works hard at physical therapy. She doesn’t sit around and complain. She is certainly determined to get well,” said Walter Reed spokeswoman Beverly Chidel.

People who have seen her said she is psychologically traumatized, and appears somewhat dazed, though she is better now than in the early weeks. Recently she has talked on the phone to friends and sent e-mails from her laptop.

Booth reported from Nasiriyah, interviewing Iraqi doctors and nurses in the hospitals where Lynch was treated, and Iraqi citizens who witnessed elements of the initial capture. Priest and Schmidt reported from Washington, interviewing military and intelligence officials with detailed knowledge of Lynch’s capture and rescue, as well as officials close to the Lynch family.

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*Megan Coleman-Rihn honors her grandfather who was killed during the Vietnam War at a Father's Day memorial at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Sunday. AP photo by Charles Dharapak.*



[http://pacific.afis.osd.mil/otf/join\\_the\\_team.cfm](http://pacific.afis.osd.mil/otf/join_the_team.cfm)



*Chief Warrant Officer Mike Lembo stands beside the newly arrived AH-64D Apache Longbow Helicopter during a press day at the U.S. military Camp Humphreys in Pyongtack, 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Seoul, Monday, June 15, 2003. (AP Photo/Katsumi Kasahara)*



*Sgt. Jason Hays cools off in the heat after finishing a patrol in Balad, Iraq, on Saturday. AP photo by Saurabh Das.*



*A boy watches new farmer soldiers during a military ceremony in Buga, some 180 miles southwest of Bogota, Colombia Monday, June 16, 2003. President Alvaro Uribe's government is deploying throughout the country thousands of young volunteer farmers to do their military service defending their villages. (AP Photo/Oswaldo Paez)*